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BABYLONIAN PROVERBS

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The texts edited here prove conclusively that the Babylonians possessed books of wisdom closely allied to the specimens of that type of literature in Aramaic and Hebrew. K. 4347 (=II R. 16) is the only nearly complete tablet of this kind of Babylonian literature which we possess and probably does not belong to a series. Obverse and reverse have each three double columns of about sixty-five lines and when complete must have held nearly four hundred lines and about one hundred proverbs. Sm. 61¹ was a much smaller tablet, also not part of a series, and ends with a saying exhorting men to study literature and the art of writing. This is the only tablet of proverbs on which the last line has been preserved, and it is on this evidence alone that I infer that each tablet is complete in itself.

The major tablet and the fragments are drawn up in two languages, Sumerian and Semitic, and all are copies made from Babylonian tablets for the Library of Ašurbanipal. Inasmuch as these proverbs represent the most profound reflections upon life which

¹ Also published by Delitzsch, *AL*.

emanated from the Babylonian schools, it is important to have some opinion regarding the age from which they come. I am convinced, solely on grammatical grounds, that the Sumerian is *not* the original. It contains many evidences of Semitic influence and the type of wisdom is so clearly allied to that of the Hebrews that we must attribute the production of these profound observations to Semitic thinkers. Inasmuch as these tablets already existed in Babylonia before the time of Ašurbanipal and their literary form agrees so closely with the Sumero-Babylonian selections from the legal codes, the so-called *ana itti-šu* series which probably date from the classical period, it is most natural to assign the proverbs to the same period.

It is not at all unlikely that profound wisdom of this kind was current in the Babylonian schools as early as 2300 B.C. or the period of the Isin, Larsa, and Babylonian dynasties. We have here evidence of pan-Babylonian influence in Asia in still another type of literature which was previously supposed to be original and almost unique in Hebrew. In fact, even the most cautious and conservative Assyriologists are rapidly becoming pan-Babylonists in a religio-cultural sense. I must profess that my study of this type of literature has led me to complete acceptance of pan-Babylonian influence in the evolution of all that is greatest and most cultural among the ancient Semites.

The importance of Babylonian wisdom-literature has been greatly obscured by the unfortunate first attempt in its interpretation by Martin Jäger, *Beiträge zur Assyriologie*, II, 274-303. He supposed K. 4347 to be a series of riddles and Brünnow was quite justified in his scathing criticism of Jäger's work, *ZA*, VIII, 125-31. In mitigation of Jäger's ineffectual attempt to translate the proverbs, we should not overlook the fact that Sumerian was little understood at that time (1893), and a considerable number of the proverbs are preserved in Sumerian only. Since the publication of the chief text in II R 16, a considerable fragment has been joined, completing the top of col. II and the end of col. IV. The left edge of the tablet is broken away so that columns I and VI are completely lost. I have devoted my attention to a philological interpretation of this literature and have not ventured upon a discussion of related subjects.

Obv. Col. II

- § 17. 6. [. AL-SİG-SİG] i ta-maḥ-ḥa-aṣ
 [uz^u ZAL-LU-TA] ina li-pi-i²
 [.] GID: ta-šam-miṭ

"The thou shalt sever and from the omentum thou shalt take it out."

- § 18. 9. [uz^u ZAL-LU NA-AL-KUR- li-pa-a² la ta-ak-kal
 KUR-E]
 [ū MUD NA-AL-NAG-E] u da-ma la te³-te-iš-ta

"Thou shalt not eat the omentum and blood thou shalt not drink."

- § 19. 11. [NAM-SUR] ṣa-ar-[ra-ti]
 [NA-AL- AGA-E] la te-pu-[uš]
 [Nf] pu-luḥ-ta [šipti?]
 [ZA-E NU-MU-UN-KUR-E] la ik-kal-ka

"Baseness thou shalt not do wherefore fear of judgment(?) shall not consume thee."

- § 20. 16. a-ma-ta la tu-lam-man
 ṣa-tu ana libbi-ka
 at

"Words thou shalt not employ falsely to thy heart"

²lipû denotes probably the omentum of the intestines (Heb. חֵלֶב) as well as the membrane covering the fetus, the caul. In all ages considerable importance has been attached to the presence of caul on the face of a child and, as late as the middle of the last century, the caul of a child was sold in London at an extravagant price since it was supposed to bring good fortune to its owner. The same superstition existed in Babylonia. "If a ewe bear a lion and lipû in a appišu šakin, caul is found on its face, [the land will have food to eat]." "If a ewe bear a lion and bamatsu ša imitti lipâ kuzza t uḥdu in a māti bašši, its rump (?) on the right side be covered with caul, there will be abundance in the land." Then follows the omen if the left rump (?) be covered, in which case the prophecy is the reverse gabri, i.e., there will not be abundance. In case both right and left rump (?) are covered the king will have no adversary, Boissier, *Choiz*, 28, 11-14. It will be noticed also that the grammatical text *CT*, XX, 40, 47, states that the presence of lipû, or the omentum near the gall indicates t uḥdu, abundance (misunderstood by Meissner, *SAI*, 3702). lipû is often used of the fat or lard on the omentum. For example *BM*. 21256 Obv. 2, two shekels of oil and two of lipû; and a shekel weight of lipû is used in a medical preparation, *CT*, XXIII, 43, 11. The restriction concerning the eating of the fat of the omentum accords with the Hebrew ritual of Lev. 3:3, where the חֵלֶב is among the parts of the meal-offering which are burned. Whether lipû is philologically connected with חֵלֶב, I would not venture to affirm.

³te is repeated by error of the copyist. The law against the eating of blood is one which we should expect to find in a religion so advanced and spiritualized as the Babylonian. This restriction stands on a level with the ritualistic prohibition of the Hebrews (Lev. 7:27) concerning the eating of blood. In the case of the Hebrews, however, this prohibition comes late and was directed against a custom which appears to have been prevalent in the earlier period.

- § 21. 18. [NAM-ĠUL-LA] [li-im-]mut-ta
 [NA-MU-UN-AGA-E] [la] te-ip-pu-uš
 [GIL-SA-A(?) DA-ER-E] [su(?)-ku(?)-]ut-ta da-ri-ta
 [. AL-TEG-E] ta-laḳ-ḳi

"Evil thou shalt not do and so an everlasting treasure(?) thou shalt obtain."

- § 22. 22. [. .]ḳa-ḳi-bu-a mi-lam ma-
 ḳu-ut
 [.]tu-a il-ki
 [. . (?) še]-gi-ru mi-lam uš-
 ziz
 [. . .] ut-te-ir

- § 23. 26. ḳa-ḳi-bu
 (?) še-gi-ri
 [. .]-ut šu-mi

- § 24. 29. [. . .] zi-ir-ma
 [. . .]-ra-am
 [. . ?še-gi]ru-tu
 uš

- § 25. 33. ti
 ma
 aṣ

 ri-ši

- § 26. 38. [. .]-ṣu li-mun
 um-ma-a-tum šul-ma i-ša-a

"When the is evil, the armies will have success."

- § 27. 40. [NU-]NAD AL-PEŠ-A ina la na-ki⁵-mi-i e-rat-me
 [E]-ŠE NU-KUR-DA-A-NI ina la a-ka-li-me
 AL-GÜR-RI EN-E-ŠE⁴ ka-ab-rat

"Without copulation does a woman conceive and without eating does she become corpulent?"

⁴ E-ŠE EN-E-ŠE, a correlative conjunction, is a variant of ENNAŠ ENNAŠ, *Sum. Gram.*, § 238.

⁵ nāku, to copulate, embrace in sleep, Arabic نكح, see Brünnow in ZA, 8, 127; Meissner, *MVAG*, 1907, 152; Hunger, *ibid.*, 1909, 226.

- § 28. 43. UM-ME-DA NÁ-A na-a-ku šu-nu-ka
GA-KGA IB-TA-AN-RU⁶ u-da-ad-da⁶

"Copulation supplies milk to give to suckle."

The point of this proverb appears to be that procreation must precede birth and the nursing of children. Both of the proverbs in the last two paragraphs are probably aimed at the indolent wives of Babylonia who sought after luxury and shrank from motherhood, a burden which many left to slave wives. They cannot expect descendants of their own blood without complying with the laws of Nature.

- § 29. 45. GA-GAR MU-DA-AN-KÁR⁷ lu-uš-kun ik-ki-mu
GA-AN- DIRIG- GA lu-ut- tir-ma
A-BA MU-RA-AN-SĪG⁸ man-nu i-nam-din

"If I toil it is seized away from me; if I toil even more and again who will repay me?"

Brünnow, ZA, VIII, 129, gave a translation of this proverb which accords substantially with my own. The sage evidently intends to disparage ambition and wearisome toil. The second part of the proverb I take to mean, "Even if I do more than is required of me, who will appreciate it?" That is, it is useless to exert oneself to do more than one has agreed to do, for nobody will be grateful for it.

- § 30. 48. ŪB A-NU-GÁL-LA AL-BAL- [burta šala mēiḥri]
BAL
SU IN-A-ŠE-NU-A⁹ AL-ŠĀR- ma-ša-ak la šen-[ni ušarri]
ŠĀR

"A well where no water is he has dug; husk without grain he has raised."¹⁰

⁶ The verb dadû, to supply milk to an infant. The Sumerian has GA-KGA.A, "breast+milk drinking" and AU=šarāku, to give. dadû, therefore, "to feed on milk at the breast." The noun dādû, "babe, beloved," I take to be the participle dādī'u > dādû, one who feeds at the breast, hence "infant." For the final long vowel, see dadu-u-a, my babe, my beloved, VAB, IV, 62, 11. The infinitive possibly in Tašmetum ilat su-bi u da-di, goddess of prayer and child fostering, King, *Magic*, no. I, 37 = XXXIII, 20.

⁷ For the Sumerian precativae as conditional, see *Sum. Gram.*, § 219, and for the passive infix DA, p. 146. The Semitic has "they seize from me."

⁸ RA infixed properly denotes only the dative of the sec. per. sing., § 197.

⁹ The Sumerian has literally, "covering of straw in which there is no grain." For šennu = grain in the stalk, vide K. 9964, 6, še-in i[kli] = . . . ašagga, and še-in-ni = . . . in-nu-ĜA. in-a-še is probably equivalent to še-in-nu, whence šennu "grain in the straw." in-nu=tibnu, straw, is assured by the syllabars, but še-in-nu=tibnu is nowhere found, despite Delitzsch, *HW*, 700, and Meissner, *SAI*, 5424. It is probable that še-in-nu is everywhere to be read šennu, grain in the straw, unthreshed grain, and to be kept distinct from tibnu.

¹⁰ Proverb 30 is a meditation upon the rewards of toil, a theme entered upon in paragraph 29.



- § 31. 50. A-RI-A-ŠÚ DINGIR-BI a-na[na]-me-e i-lu-šu-nu
 GÍ-GÍ-NE i- tu-ru
 É-ŠUB-ŠÚ ana biti na-di-i
 AKKIL GA-AN-TUR i-te-ru-ub ik-kil-lum
 GA-AN-DURUN NIG-ERIM aš-šab rag-gu
 55. NU *UR-RA GIŠPITUGGA RI- ul ú-lab-bar ḥa-as-su
 IM¹¹
 UM-ME-TAG AZAG-ZU um-ma-na im-ka
 [NAM-AZAG-]ZU-AN-NI LU- ša ni-me-ik-šu bêli-šu
 GAL-BI
 [GIŠPI TUG-]GA-NA RI-GA¹² la ḥa-as-su
 LÙ KAL-LA ù mim-ma aḳ-ra
 60. GIŠ PI TUG-GA-NA ša¹⁴ be-el-šu
 [LUGAL-NI NU-]ZU-ŠÚ-A¹³ im-šu-šu
 [NIG-ŠAG-ĜAB-NI GÁL]LI-EN ib-ba-áš-ši ḥi-šaḥ-ta-šu-ma
 [SAG-NI BA-]IL-LA in-na-ši ri-is-su

"Where the gods into the wilderness have turned away, into the ruined house lamentation has entered, and the tenant¹⁵ is wickedness. He that is wise attains not to old age. The skilled workman and the artisan whose master need not give heed to their skill, and to whom their master entrusts everything valuable—unto him is come hunger. The best¹⁶ that he has is carried away."

§ 31 is a meditation upon godlessness, the evils which befall a community whose gods have deserted it or have been taken into captivity. A considerable number of Babylonian psalms and liturgies are based upon the same theme. "The city to which its lord turns not in compassion, sighs itself away into silence;" so begins one of the long liturgies, *Sumerian and Babylonian Psalms*, 96, 1. The gods who were carried away into captivity, were supposed to have abandoned their temples and their cities because of the sins of their worshipers. Therefore, at the end of the liturgies the psalmists invariably attached a hymn to the flute "libbi-ka linûḥ kabitta-ka lipšaḥ," "May thy heart be stilled, may thy soul be appeased." That the same theory of a religious aristocracy in which the economic welfare of the state depends absolutely upon the presence and good-will of the patron deities, should be found in the Book of Wisdom itself shows the profound religious attitude which pervaded Babylonian thought.

¹¹ RIM is apparently a word for "run, go," Br. 4818. *UR-RA . . . RIM=labiruta illak. For the value GIŠPITUGGA, see SAK., 64, Statuette f) II, 5.

¹² Literally "his attention he neglected," uznāšu uramma.

¹³ We have here the Sumerian for "to forget," viz., GIŠPI TUG NU-ZU. Note the agglutinative construction LÙ . . . ŠÚ="to whom his lord did not give heed in regard to anything valuable." The text has  which I have regarded as an error for .

¹⁴ Corresponds to lù.

¹⁵ For aššabu, tenant, see Hammurabi Code, § 78.

¹⁶ rissu might be for rêš-šu, or rit-šu "his fodder." rêšu in the sense of "choice, best," is conjectural.

§ 32. Col. II, 64 to end, traces of
three lines.

Col. III, 1-2 [AN-ZIL] zil-li mu-ka-ti-[. . .]
[KALAMA-TA MU-UN-KUR-E] ik-kal¹⁷ ina māti

"Insolence against he shall do in the land."

§ 33. 3. GIŠ-GĪN [MU-NI-TUM] it-bal-mi²⁰ a-bu
ŠĀM GĪN- BI šī-im ka-ni-šu
Û ŠAG-TŪM-MA ŠĀM [ú]¹⁸-BI ù kir-bi-e-tum
E-NE-E¹⁹ šī-im šam-mi-ša

"Does a marsh take away for itself the price of its reeds,
or a field the price of its vegetation?"

§ 34. 7. Á-GAL NI-KUR-E ik-kal li-'-u
ŠĀM Á-BI [E-ŠE] šī-im i-di-šu
Û Á-NU-GÁL-LA ù la li-'-u
ŠĀM GINA-BI E-ŠE šī-im šer-ri-šu²¹

"The strong man lives from the price of his hire, but the weak lives from
the price of his children."

Paragraphs 33 and 34 are a meditation upon the frailty and helplessness
of man compared with the fertility and independence of nature. The marsh
lands produce reeds and the fields produce grass, but they do not consume
the produce of their toil. But even the strong man must live upon his
earnings. Among men there are some so feeble that they cannot earn a
living and are compelled to sell their children to obtain food to eat.

§ 35. 11. SAG-KŪR lib-bi bi
. . . KŪR(?) SAG-KŪR bi-ki-ti ša
. zī-EN šī-ta-la

§ 36. 14. [. . .]-LA-MU AL-ŠĀG ú-ri-mi²³ da-[mi-ik]
ÛG-MA-E- DÉ ina ni-ši-ia
TI-IL-BA-AB-DUG²²-EN-E-ŠE gu-u-m-mu-ra-a-n-ni

"My is good yet it puts an end to me from among my people."

¹⁷ For the phrase zilli akālu, "to act disgracefully, to insult"; cf. an-zil-la
ša ilāni ašakku takul. "Thou has insulted the gods, a disgraceful thing," Jas-
trow, *Fragment of the Etana Legend*, Rev. 9=Obv. 7, *JAOS*, Vol. XXX, and for the idea,
ikkib a-ku-lum ul idi, "if I have acted insolently I know not," IV R. 10a, 46.

¹⁸ ú=šammu is omitted by the copyist.

¹⁹ The corresponding member of the correlative EN-E is omitted at the end of l. 4. For
the construction, see *Sum. Gram.*, § 238.

²⁰ For mi interrogative suffix, see also § 27.

²¹ For the idea cf. Virolleaud, *Sin*, XXXIV, 58, if there be an eclipse of the moon on
the 14th of the 12th month, nišē šer-ri-ši-na ana kaspim ipaššarū, "the
people will ransom their children for money" (cited also by Muss-Arnolt).

²² The full form of this compound verb is til-dug; til alone means gamāru. For
the element dug attached to roots to strengthen their meanings, see *Sum. Gram.*, § 153.

²³ urimu is a word wholly unknown, and the Sumerian equivalent is broken away.
LAL is possible from the traces on the tablet. On the other hand mi may be the emphatic

- § 37. 17. DŪ-A-BI AL-ŠÁG ana ka-la da-mi-iḳ
 û 𐎶𐎵 GAR-IB BA-AN-TU u u-la-pa²⁴ la-bi-iš
 "He is altogether righteous and good, yet he is clothed in rags."

- § 38. 19. IGI-GUD DA-DU-A pa-an al-pi a-li-ki
 MUD-ŠÚ NE-IB-RA-RA ina up-pi²⁵ ta-rap-pi-is
 (Semitic.) "The face of a walking ox with a lash dost thou smite?"
 (Sumerian.) "The face of a walking ox with a lash thou shalt not smite."

- § 39. 21. DUG-MU AN-TA-TŪM-TŪM- al-la-ka bir-ka-a-a
 MU
 GĪR-MU NU-KUŠ-Ū la a-ni-ḥa še-pa-a-a
 LŪ SAG-DŪ-DŪ NU-TUK-A la ra-aš ta-šim-ti
 GIGAM MU-UN-UŠ-E ip-pi-ra ri-dan-ni
 "Yet as for me whose knees hasten, whose feet are not weary, a man of no judgment pursues me with sorrows."

- § 40. 25. DŪR-A-NA ME-EN a-ga-la-šú [ana-ku]
 ANŠU ŠUGUB²⁶-ŠÚ AB-LAL-E ana pa-ri-e ša-an-da-ku
 𐎶𐎵GAR ŠU-GI-ME NA-NAM nar-kab-ta ša-bat-ku-ma
 GÍ-Ū 𐎶𐎶𐎶 šu-[te]-ú [ḳanī u riti]
 AB-IL-IL-E-EN a-za-ab-[ba al]

"His ass am I. With a mule I am harnessed. A wagon I draw. To seek for cane and fodder I bear the yoke."

§ 41. 30-34. Semitic text entirely obliterated. In the Sumerian section only a few signs preserved.

- § 42. 35. GÍG-A-NU-ZU NU-ME-A si-im-me[ša asū la ibaššú]
 ŠAG-GAR-RA KUR-E la a-[ka-lu ina ḥišaḥti]
 NU-ME-A [ibaššī]
 GÍŠ APIN [epinnu]
 KUBABBAR-RA-[BI] [šarpi-šu]

or interrogative particle, and the word in question would be uru. In this case one might choose the word ūru, roof, house, but the Sumerian excludes this interpretation. A reasonable interpretation is not possible at present.

²⁴ The meaning "cord, string," is the only one established by the texts. The lexicons give the meaning "friend" as possible, for which Arabic 'ilfun, would supply a parallel. Note that ulapu and pū, strings and straw, are used with clay to form a kind of adhesive mortar, V R. 42. 23f. ulap lupputim, the cord of a worn-out bag or bottle (CT, 18. 14, 54) forms part of a magical broth, IV R. 58 I 30 and 55, 32.

²⁵ uppu, literally "braid," woven strand of coarse fiber. Sumerian MUD=uppu is dialectic for mug a coarse cloth, *Sum. Gram.*, p. 229. MUD-ḳūš=uppi aḥu, braid of a net, CT, XIX, 19, 49.

²⁶ Read Br. 10864; cf. *DHW* under paūr; ZA, XVII, 240.

40. GIŠ
GUŠKIN-BI	[ḫuraši-šu . . .]
A $\frac{1}{2}$ GAR 3 SAM-MU ²⁷	[mê $\frac{1}{2}$ gar 3 ammati]
ŠAG UTŪL-AŠ ŠUB-DA	[ina libbi diḫari nadī]
MU-UN-TŪM-TŪM-MU	[anašši]

"A disease for which there is no physician (I have). (For me) in hunger there is nought to eat. [For the hire of] watering machines [I have not] silver; [for the hire of . . . [I have not] gold. Water which is put in water buckets for 14 feet I draw."²⁸


§ 43. 45. ABZAL-MU	"My oven, which
TUG-ÁM RIG-TA	like a garment has been torn in pieces,
MÀ-E GŪN-E	I gather.
ĜAB-ILA-MU ²⁹	My servant
ABZU RI-RIG	the ocean has seized away." ³⁰

§ 44.	É-A ESIR-È-A	ina bit [kupri]
	SÍG-AL-ÚR-RA-TA	[u agurri]
	AL-DURUN-[E-ŠE]	uššab
	IM-MA PISAN-SAG-GÀ	tiṭu
	MUĜ-MU AL-GISAL	eli-iāši inattuk
	E-NE-E-ŠE	

"In a house of pitch and burnt brick I dwell. Clay upon me flows."

§ 45. 50. MU-IM-MA SĜ-ŠAR	The of garlic
IM-MA-AN-KUR-E	I eat.
NU- ÁM	Like fire(?)
ŠAG-MU AL-GIR-GIR-E	my inwards burn.

§ 46.	GIDUR-SĜ-GA	In a full morass
	AB-Ū-[E]	I flounder, ³¹
	Ū GI-KA	and on reed of wailing(?)
	GŪ-MU-UN-ZU-[E]	I sigh in measures.
	IGI-NU-MU-NI-IN-[BAR]	My eyes see not.

²⁷ Sic! The value sam for  is supposed to be Semitic. It would be hazardous on the basis of this text alone to infer the value sam for the word for cubit. A half GAR and 3 cubits would be about 14 feet.

²⁸ The restorations and interpretation of this section are conjectural.

²⁹ ĜUB-ILA in a list of titles of menials, K. 4244, Obv. 10 (CT, XIX, 10). Cf. LÚ-ĜUB = amelu ḫuppû and explained by epiš tušši, a kind of apothecary, V R. 32, 26. Also II R. 51, 43, followed by epiš bašāmi, maker of balsams. Note ĜUB in the titles ĜUB-KAS, a mule herd, Genouillac, TSA, XXVII; Pinches, *Amherst* No. 2; Nikolski 59 Obv. II, etc. ĜUB-RA a kind of shepherd, TSA, 7 Obv. III, 13 Obv. IV; Allotte de la Fuyé, DP, 113, XII; Nikolski 13 Rev. IV, etc. K. 4244 begins with ideograms for shepherd and ĜUB-ILA is translated by šab

³⁰ The Semitic text is obliterated.

³¹ Literally "ride."

The proverb refers to the ordinary process of cremating the dead, employed in Babylonia from the earliest Sumerian period and in all periods of Babylonian history. At a man's death his god left his body so that the scribe in saying that a man's god is Šahan virtually means that he has died and is given over to the god of fire who consumes him.

Paragraphs 36-52 form a homogeneous section concerning the wrongs and violences done to the righteous in life, the brevity of human life and its worthlessness compared with animate nature. In most sections the wisdom is taught by the example of a suffering just person, as in the case of the Babylonian and Hebrew Job.

§ 53. 19. ÍD-DA-ŠÚ NE-GAR-RI-EN-AN	ina na-ri tab-ba-ši-ma
A-ZU Ú-ŠAG-DIB-ŠU-ZÍ-DA	mu-ka da-ad-da-ru
AN-GA-ÁM ⁴¹ GIŠ ŠAR-ŠÚ	ap-pu-na-ma
GAR-RI-EN-NA-ZU	ina ki-ri-i tab-ši-ma
SU-LUM-ZU	su-lu-up-pa-ka
ZÍ AN-GA-ÁM ⁴¹	mar- tum

"If thou art put in a river thy water becomes straightway stinking.
If thou art put in a garden thy fruit truly is bitter."

§ 54. 25. DE Û-MU ⁴² -IN-AGA-A	aš-šar-šu-ma ⁴³
Û E-NE NIG-Û-TU-UD-DA-NI	šu-ú ša al-ti-šu-ma
NA- NAM	
ŠU-SU-UB Û-MU-NI-IN-AGA-	a-ma-aš-ša-as-su
EŠ: (sic)	
E-NE SÍG AN-GA-ÁM	šu-ú li-bit-tum-ma

"If I call unto him lo! he is one born of woman.
If I polish him lo! he is but unburnt brick."

Proverbs 53-54 continue the general idea of the preceding sections. Man is an obnoxious creature who pollutes the water in which he bathes. He cannot be appealed to as a god in time of trouble for he is born of woman and of the earth earthly. Note the veiled reference to the creation of man from clay. According to the Epic of Creation, Marduk formed man from his own blood (bk. VI, 5) of which legend Berossus probably gives the correct version when he says that Marduk commanded a god to sever his (Marduk's) head and mix his blood with earth to form man. The most detailed description of the creation of man in Cuneiform sources states that Marduk created

CT, XXIV, 24. 9, 11 with II R. 59b 21. ŠERAḤ lit. "threshed grain" (ripsu ša še'im) is also a name of the grain goddess Nisaba (še-raḥ).

⁴¹ Cf. GANAM=piḡa, truly, BA, V, 674, 1. ANGAM also in the date formula of the 12th year of Samsuiluna. MU SAMSUİLUNA LUGAL KUR GÜN-DIRIG AN-GA-ÁM MU-DA-BAL-ES, "Year when all lands suddenly rebelled against Samsuiluna."

⁴² The scribe has probably omitted MI after MU.

⁴³ For ašāru, to call, cry out, vide CT, XVIII, 9, 24, Syn. šarāḫu.

him from earth and reeds with the assistance of the goddess Aruru.⁴⁴ In another legend of creation EA the Water god, father of Marduk, creates the representatives of the various arts from the clay of the ocean.⁴⁵

§ 55. 30. ĠEN[BUR] ⁴⁶ SI-NU-SÁ	ḥab-bur-ru ⁴⁷ la i-ša-ru
AB-ŠIN- E	še-ir-ú
NA-AN-NI-IB-TU-UD	aī ú-[šar-ri-i]
SE-GUL NA-AN-NI-IB-GIM-	zi-ra aī ib-[ni-i]
MA	

"If the seed corn be not sound it will not produce verdure and create seed."

§ 56. 34. ŠE-NIM-MA	še-um ḥar-[pu] ⁴⁸
SI-NI-SÁ-SÁ-E-NE	iš-še-ir
A-NA-ÁM	mi-nam-[mi]
NI-ZU-UN-NE-EN	ni-i-di
ŠE-SI-GA	še-um ub-bu-lu
SI-NI-SÁ-SÁ-E-ŠE	iš-še-ir
A-NA-ÁM	mi-nam-mi
NI-ZU-UN-NE-EN-E-ŠE	ni-i-di

"Parched grain thrives but what do we understand thereof?
Dried grain thrives but what do we understand thereof?"

§ 57. 42. GA-NAM GA-DIG-GA-EN-NE-	pi-ḫa-a ma-at man
EN:	
GIŠ-EN ⁴⁹ GA-AN-KUR	lu-ku-ul
GA-NAM GA-TI-LI-NE-EN:	pi-ḫa-a bul-lu-uṭ
GIŠ-EN GA-NE-IB-GAR	lu-uš-kun

⁴⁴ *CT*, XIII; *BM*. 82-5-22, 1048 Obv. 17-21.

⁴⁵ Weissbach, *Miscellen*, Tafel 12, 26 ff.

⁴⁶ Read ŠE-KAK.

⁴⁷ Cf. K. 2882 Obv. 10 (Boissier *Choix*, II, 59) where an omen is taken from the ḥabburu piše, "white ḥabburu." ḥabburu, Syn. of udditu (*V R*, 32, 60) and in Sm. 1335 (*Choix*, 153) a mark on the liver is kima udditi "like an udditu"; the tablet has a drawing of the udditu resembling a kernel of wheat. Note also ĠENBUR = zikpu and pir'u, "sprout," *SAI*, 5441 ff.

⁴⁸ For ḥarāpu to dry, be dried, Heb. חָרַב, see also Boissier, *DA*. 66, 17; šumma ina nāri mēlu ḥar-pu nabbillum ittabšu šammaššamnu ḥar-pu damik, "If in a canal the flood dry up and there be black beetles (?), the dried sesame will be good." The *p* is apparently established by Meisser, *SAI*, 6775, NIM=ḥarpatu, dryness. For NIM=ḥarpu (*Prm.*) see also *DA.*, 66, 18 NIM variant of ḥarpu.

⁴⁹ GIŠ=mannu; cf. MULU=mannu, *Sum. Gram.*, p. 165. Both GIŠ and GALU>MULU are words for "man."

"So quickly it dies and who doth eat thereof? So quickly it is brought to life and who doth cause it?"

§ 58. 46. A-GĪR-GĪR-NE	iṭ-ṭi-ib-bu-[an-ni?]
ZI-MU MA-DA-KŪD-DA	ik-te-ru ⁵⁰ na-piṣ-ti
ZA(?) MU-NI-IN-DIB-	ana na-du(?) -a as-[sa-bat]
BA	
TŪG- MU	ṣu-ba-a-[ti]
Ú-MUG E	iḥ-tal-[la-pu]

"They have drowned me in water, my soul they have gathered. For a . . . I am taken. They clothe themselves in my garments."

§ 59. 51. MU-LU È-E- NE	mu-lu-u ⁵¹ u-ṣu(?)—šù ⁵¹
NAGAR NE-IB-MÁ-DÉ-E	nam-ga-ri ip-pat-ti ⁵²

"As for man his departure the carpenter buildeth."

§ 60. ERI ^{GIŠ} KU-A-NI	a-lu ša kak-ka-šù
. . . . LA-GI	la dan-nu
.	na-ak-ru
.	ina pa-an a-bu-ul-li-šù
.	ul ip-paṭ-ṭar

"The city whose weapons are not mighty—from before its city gate the foe shall not be warded off."

§ 61. Col. V, 1-5. Only a few uncertain signs in the Semitic section.

§ 62. 6-9. Sumerian section mostly destroyed. In the Semitic section a few legible signs.

§ 63. 10. IMI-ŠU-RĪN-NA-GIM	kima ti-nu-ri
Ū-RA-TA	la-bi-ri
KŪR-KŪR-ZU	ana nu-uk-ku-ri-ka
AL- GÍG	ma-ri-iṣ

⁵⁰ *katāru* is the verb ordinarily employed in the classical period in the expression for dying, *ištu ilu-ša ikteruša*, "After her god has gathered her," *CT*, II, 24, 27 et p. The word was previously taken by me "be complete, make complete," but I now agree with Jensen as to the root meaning "gather, bind," from which we have *kitru*, "alliance." *ikterunimma*, "they formed an alliance," Senn., *Prism*, II, 75; the Ethiopians and Meluhhi whom *iktera ittišu*, he formed into an alliance with himself, *BM*, 83-1-18, 483, Rev. 5. For the root *gid* > *kid* (= *kud*) to bind, see *Sum. Gram.*, p. 215.

⁵¹ The signs *lu-u* are not certain. The text has clearly *AŠ* not *ŠU*. *uṣu* infinitive (?).

⁵² I have ventured to connect this form with the word *batû*, apparently a by-form of *banû*, to build. The doubling of *p* in the present would be, however, difficult and the interpretation is conjectural.

"Like an oven which has become old thy changing is difficult."⁵³

The proverb would probably be more easily interpreted if we knew the meaning of the preceding sections. The second person singular appears to designate mankind in general. The proverb evidently means that the nature of man cannot be radically changed. He is like a clay oven hardened by long heating which cannot be mended without being destroyed.

§ 64. 14. NI- ⁵⁴ DU-NE ⁵⁵ MU-UN-ILA:	tal-lak taš-ša-a
A-ŠAG LÛ-KÛR-RA-[KA]	e-ki-él nak-ri
NI-DU-[MU]-UN-ILA	il-lak iš-ša-a
A-ŠAG-ZU LÛ-KÛR-RA	e-ki-él-ka nak-ru

"If thou goest and carriest away (the produce) the field of a stranger, the stranger will come and carry away (the produce of) thy field."

§ 65. 18. NAM-LUGAL-LA	šar-ru-tu
. . . BA-Ē-A-GE	a
. . . KU-AM	kima [. . . . ṣubati]

"Royal power disappeareth(?) like of a garment."

Both sections are mostly illegible, but the reference is clearly to the brevity of temporal power.

§ 66. e mi-nu ⁵⁶	Alas! what
u-ḫi-il-la-ba bita	shall cover the house?

§ 67. pu-uḫ-li na-'-pi	"Let beans(?) be baked
meš-tu-u uliḫ-ḫar-	that the do not follow(?)
šu ⁵⁷	them."

§ 68. 25-34. Only ends of lines. § 69. 35-6. § 70. 37-8.

§ 71. 39-40. . . . ri kima ša- like a pig
ḫi-i	
. . . . kas-pa ta-ša- money thou shalt pay.
kal	

Traces of §§ 72. 73. 74.

⁵³ Semitic, "it is difficult to change thee."

⁵⁴ The text has GIŠ (!).

⁵⁵ NE has the force of a condition here, cf. *Sum. Gram.*, p. 129.

⁵⁶ Sumerian obliterated.

⁵⁷ Or iḫ-ḫur(? mur?)-šu. From maḫāru?

Sm. 61

- § 2. 2-4. a-na lib ḫa-ad-di "Upon a glad heart
 šam-nu ša-pi-ik-ma oil is poured out
 ma-am-man uli-di but none knoweth it."⁵⁸

- § 3. 5-6. [SUM-]MA-AB LUGAL-LA-GE na-da-nu ša šarri
 [DUG-GA] šU-ḲA-DUG-GE ṭu-ub-bu ša ša-ḳi-i
 "The giving of the king⁵⁹ is the making good of the cup-bearer."

- § 4. 7-8. SUM-MA-AB LUGAL-LA-GE
 šAG-GA ISKIM-A-GE dum-mu-ḳu ša a-ba-rak-ku
 "The giving of the king⁵⁹ is the making gracious of the prophet."

Proverbs 3 and 4 seem to be an observation concerning the natural greed of mankind. Money makes a good cup-bearer as well as a favorable prophet. The second observation places the character of the Babylonian seers in an exceedingly unfavorable light. Augury of all kinds formed an essential part of Babylonian life. This paragraph is a skeptical criticism concerning the value of the diviner's art, which dominated the will and intellect of Babylonian culture. The proverb evidently represents the thought of some individual or exclusive school of learning whose wisdom and philosophy failed to become popular. It is, however, clear evidence of a skeptical attitude toward magic and augury, an attitude which has been hitherto supposed to be original to Greek thought.

- § 5. NAM-KU-LI ŠA⁶⁰ UD-ÀŠ-KAM ib-ru-tum ša ū-ma-ak-kal
 NAM-GÍ-ME-A-RŪ⁶¹ ki-na-tu-tu
 ŠA⁶⁰ UDA DA-ERI-KAM ša da-ra-a-ti
 "Friendship is of any day, but posterity is of eternity."

- § 6. DŪ^o-DA ša-al-tu
 KI NAM-GÍ-ME-A-RŪ-GE a-šar ki-na-tu-ti
 EME-SIG KUR-KUR kar-ši a-ka-li
 KI NAM-LUG-ŠŪ NI-GAL a-šar pa-ši-šu-ti ip-pa-aš-ši

"If there be strife in the abode of relations, there is eating of uncleanness in the place of purity."

Strife in a family is compared to defiling a holy place with filth and calumny.

⁵⁸ The words are all well known but the general sense of the proverb escapes me.

⁵⁹ Sum., "Let the king give."

⁶⁰ Sic in Sumerian, an evident Semiticism.

⁶¹ NAM-GÍ-ME and šAG-GÍM (*Br.* 3661; Boissier, *DA*, 245, 28) denote both female slavery as well as the act of begetting (and hence blood relatives). For NAM-GÍN-NI="female

- § 7. 16. GÍR ERI-KÚR-RA-ÁM u-bar-ru⁶² ina áli ša-nim-ma
SAG-GÀ-ÁM ri-e-ša

"A loafer (if he go to) another city becomes (its) head."

The idea underlying this proverb is nearly identical with that of the other well-known saying, "A prophet is not without honor save in his own country."

- § 8. 18. NÀGAR NU-UN-URÙ ME-EN [šemiru la inaššar]

"A ring does not give protection."

The proverb evidently refers to the wearing of amulets and articles designed to have magical effect. Cf. §§ 3-4.

19. NAM-DUP-ŠAR-RA DAGAL GÛ-DE-GE-E-NE A-A UM-ME-A-GE-EŠ

"Writing is the mother of orators and the father of skilled men."

This line is the last on the tablet which cannot belong to a series since it is not numbered. Unlike other proverbs this one has no Semitic version and extends across the whole tablet.

Bu. 80-7-19, 130 Obv.

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| 3. . . . DĪM-MA | a-ba-nin sa-an-kuš |
| ME-EN | is-ḥa-an dan-na-tu |
| | ana- ku |

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 6. KUR-KUR | alap na-ka-ri šam-me ik-kal |
| BA-A | alap mar[um-]ma-ni-šu |
| E-BA-NAD | gaš-ri-iš iš (sic!)-ni-il |

"The ox of a stranger he feedeth⁶³ but the ox of his workman mightily he afflicteth."

K. 8358

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| 2. LI-TAR-RI-ŠÚ BIR-BIR-RI | |
| 3. GÛN URÛ-GAL-LA AN-BU-I | mu-gal |

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 4. NÍ-DÚB A-ŠAG-GA GÍN-NA | ku-up-pu-ru ša iḫli |
| 5. ^{su} A-GA-LÁ BA-DÛL-LA ⁶⁴ | ina a-la-ki-šu na-ru-uḫ-ka |
| 6. | šu-gal-lu-lu |

slavery," v. Th. Dangin, *RTC*, 295; 291. kinatûtu has properly both senses and is connected with kinâtu, blood relation, Sum ER, UR (*Br.* 957) and note that A-RÛ is attached to NAM-GI-ME to add the idea of "male descendant." Immortality among the Babylonians consisted essentially in having male posterity.

⁶² ubarru is written with the same ideogram as lasāmu "loafer." The word is otherwise unknown.

⁶³ So Sumerian, Semitic, "the ox of a stranger eateth grass."

⁶⁴ Cf. Radau *Miscellaneous Texts*, 2, 18.

7. LUGAL	LUL-LA	šar-ru [sar-ru]
8. . . . LA	BA-AB-UŠ	mur-te-id-du-u šam-ri
9. NU-GI-NA		la ki-nu
10. . . . KU KIN	?-AM	ši-it-ta-ni ig-gal-la-šu

"A wicked king leader of the violent—the faithless with frivolity mock him."

11. NU-IL-LA	mu-ur-šu-u aš-ša-ti [la inašši?]
12. NU-IL-LA	muršū ma-ri [la inašši?]
13. BA-A	šar-ru la mu-ur-šu-u [...]
14. MA	ra-ma-ni-šu

ADDENDUM

Reference to proverbs current among the people of Babylonia and Assyria occurs in the obscure letter No. 403 of Professor Harper's *Assyrian and Babylonian Letters*. Two proverbs are cited there:

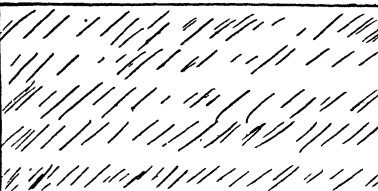

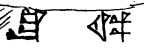
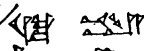
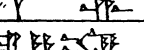
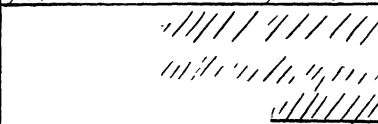
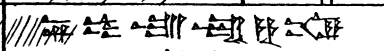
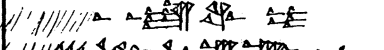
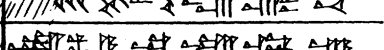

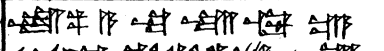
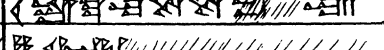

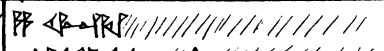
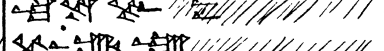
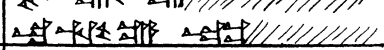

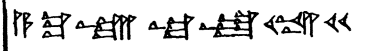
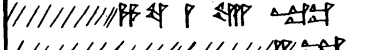
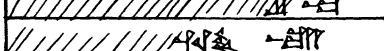

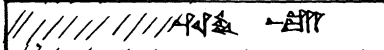
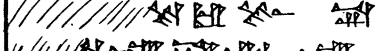
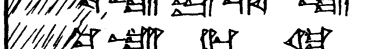

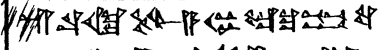
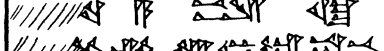
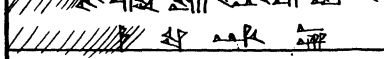

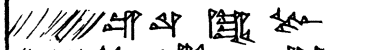
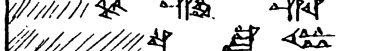
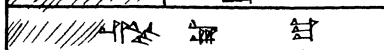

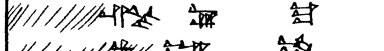
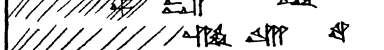
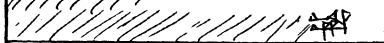

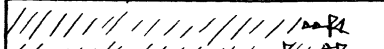
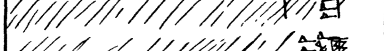

A, Obv. 4-7: ina batte ša pī nišê šakin umma kalbu ša ^{amel}paḥari ina libbi utuni kī i-ru-bu ana libbi ^{amel}paḥari u-nam-paḥ.⁶⁵ "Everywhere in the mouth of the people one hears, 'If the dog of a potter has entered into the oven, he is dear (??) to the heart of the potter.'"

B, Obv. 13-15: ina battimma ša pī šakin umma zinništu ḥaditu ina bâb bit daiāni pī-ša al-la⁶⁶ ša mûti-ša da-an. "Everywhere in the mouth of the people one hears, 'The word of an harlot in the gate of the house of the judge prevails over that of her husband.'" [For an interpretation of this letter see Johnston, *AJSL*, XXII 244.]


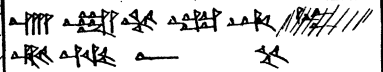
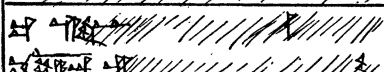
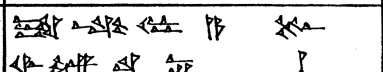
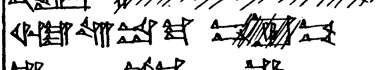
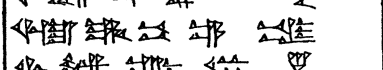
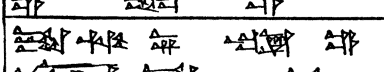
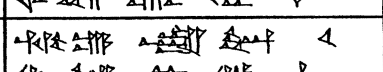
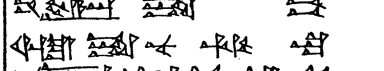
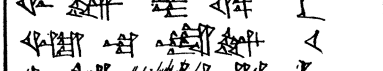
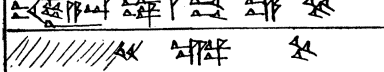

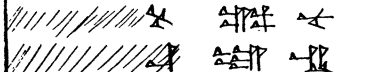

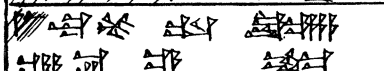
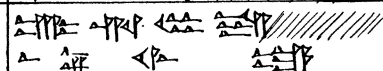
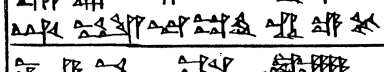
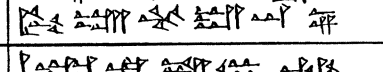
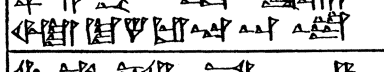
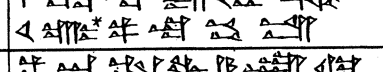
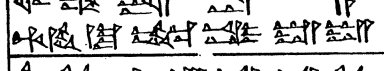
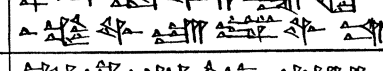
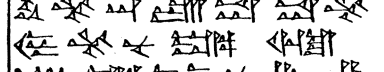
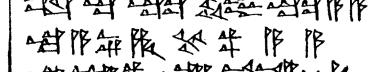
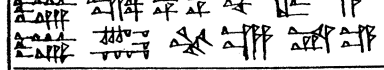
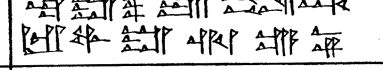
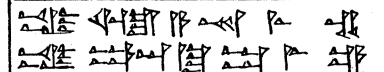
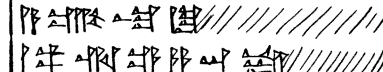
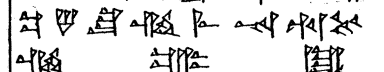
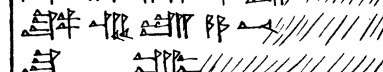
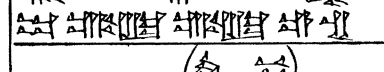
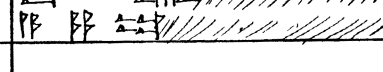
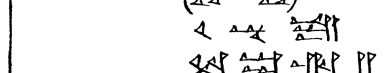
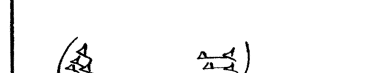
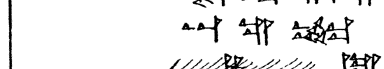

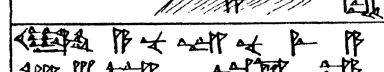
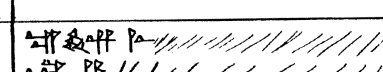
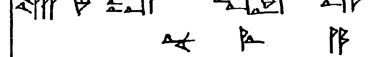
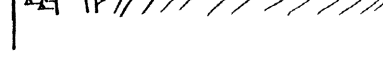
⁶⁵ For unappaḥ, cf. u-na-paḥ, Bossier, *Choix* 23, 18.

⁶⁶ Cf. Ylvisaker, *Zur Babyl. und Assyrl. Grammatik*, p. 52.




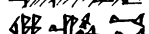


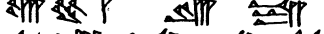








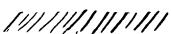
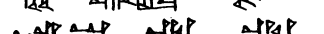
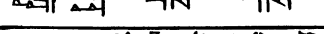

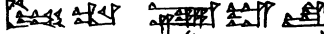
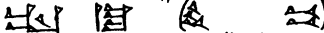

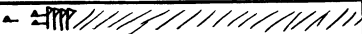
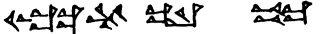
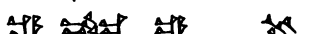
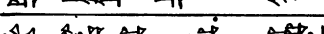

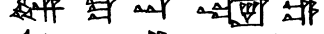


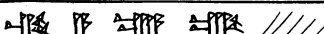
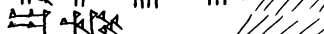
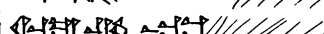
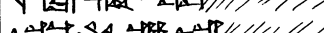
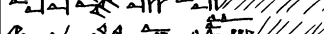
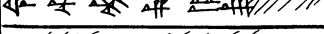
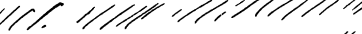
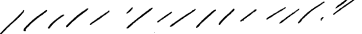
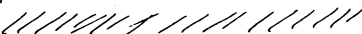
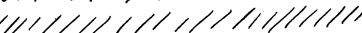
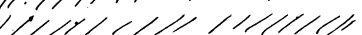
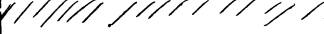



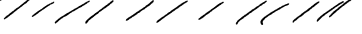



K. 4347, Obv., Col. II

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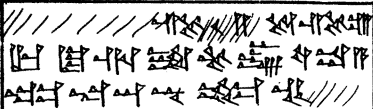
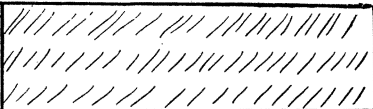
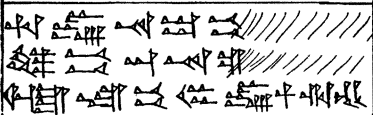
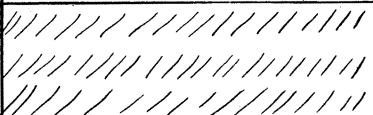
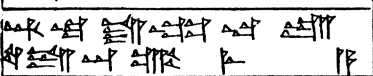
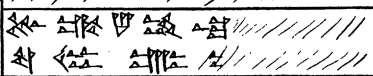
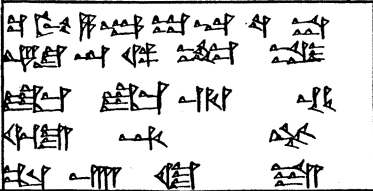
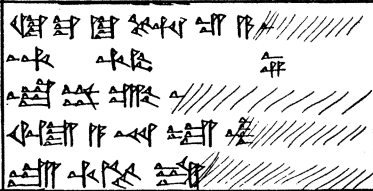
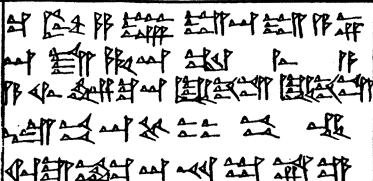
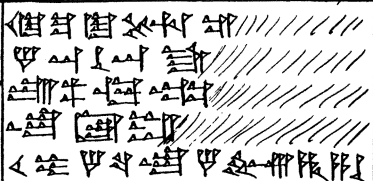
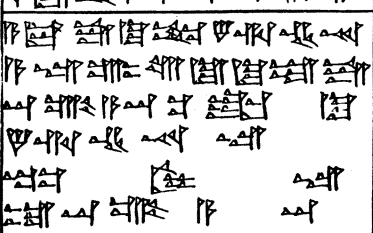
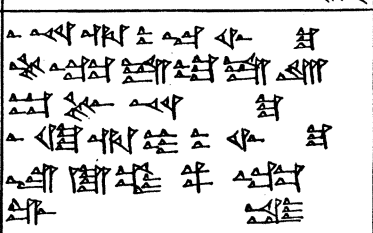
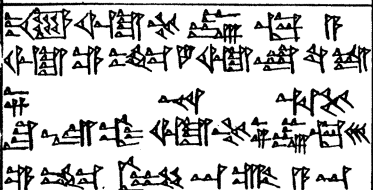
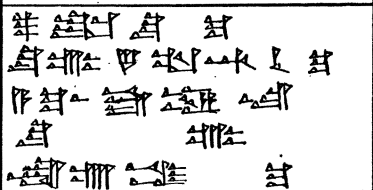
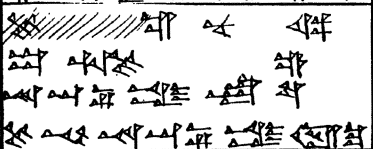
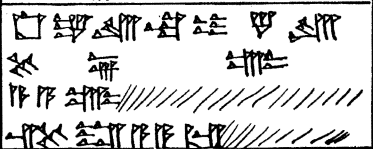
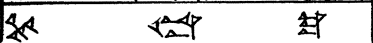
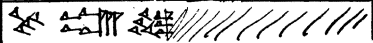
K. 4347, Obv., Col. III

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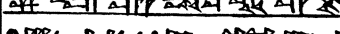
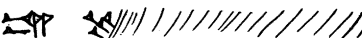
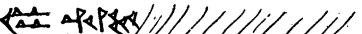
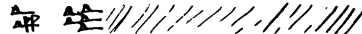

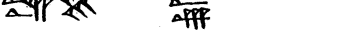

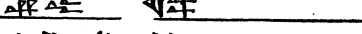

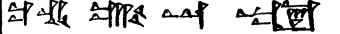

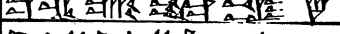



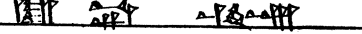
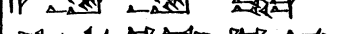
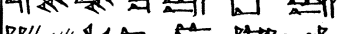
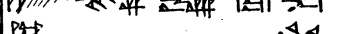



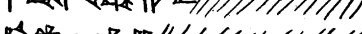
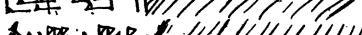
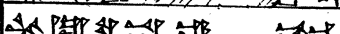
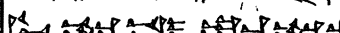
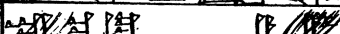
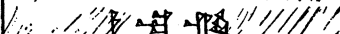
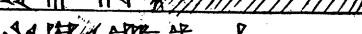
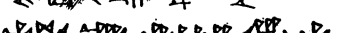






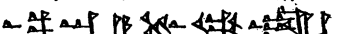

K. 4347, Obv., Col. III—Continued

<p>        </p>	<p>   </p>	40.
<p>      </p>	<p>   </p>	45.
<p>       </p>	<p>  </p>	50.
<p>     </p>		55.
<p>     </p>		
<p>      </p>	<p>      </p>	60.
<p>     </p>	<p>     </p>	







































































































































K. 4347, Rev., Col. IV

<p>  </p>	<p>  </p>	
<p>  </p>	<p>  </p>	5.
<p>  </p>	<p>  </p>	
<p>  </p>	<p>  </p>	10.
<p>  </p>	<p>  </p>	15.
<p>  </p>	<p>  </p>	20.
<p>  </p>	<p>  </p>	25.
<p>  </p>	<p>  </p>	30.
<p>  </p>	<p>  </p>	

K. 4347, Rev., Col. IV—Continued

<p>        </p>	<p>        </p>	35
<p>     </p>	<p>     </p>	40.
<p>     </p>	<p>     </p>	45.
<p>     </p>	<p>     </p>	50.
<p>    </p>	<p>    </p>	55.

K. 4347, Rev., Col. V

5.		<p>             </p>
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K. 4347, Rev., Col. V—*Continued*

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55.		

Opposite lines 12-15 are traces of the ends of lines of Col. VI.

Line 57 is the end of the tablet.

Sm. CI Rev.

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Bu. 80-7-19, 130 Obv.

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